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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Standing Committee on Commodities
Third session
Geneva, 31 October 1994
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Provisional agenda and annotations to the provisional agenda

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

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2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Analysis of ways and means to improve market opportunities for commodities in the medium term, with emphasis on examination of the best ways of achieving diversification, taking into account competitiveness, market trends and opportunities
4. Identification of means by which the competitiveness of natural products with environmental advantages could be improved*
5. Reports of the subsidiary organs of the Standing Committee
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7. Other business
8. Adoption of the report of the Standing Committee to the Trade and Development Board.

* It was agreed to avoid duplication of efforts.

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II. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Item 1: Election of officers

Rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the main Committees of the Trade and Development Board states that: "At the commencement of the first meeting of each regular session, the Committee shall elect a Chairman, five Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur from among the representatives of its members. These officers shall constitute the Bureau of the Committee. In electing the officers, due account shall be taken of the need to ensure an equitable geographical distribution." Moreover, rule 19 states that "the Bureau of the Committee shall consist of seven members, including four members from Groups A and C combined, two members from Group B and one member from Group D, referred to in the annex to General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX) as amended".

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

The provisional agenda in section I above was approved by the Standing Committee on Commodities at its second session (see TD/B/40(2)/13, annex II). As provided for in the UNCTAD calendar of meetings, the Standing Committee will have available five working days from 31 October to 4 November 1994. Throughout the session, interpretation facilities will be available for one meeting in the morning and one meeting in the afternoon. At its 10th (opening) meeting on 31 October 1994, an opening statement will be made by the Officer-in-Charge of UNCTAD or his representative. The rest of the third session of the Standing Committee will be mainly devoted to items 3, 4 and 5 of the provisional agenda.

Item 3: Analysis of ways and means to improve market opportunities for commodities in the medium term, with emphasis on examination of the best ways of achieving diversification, taking into account competitiveness, market trends and opportunities

For the consideration of this item, the Standing Committee will have before it a report by the secretariat entitled "Improving market opportunities for commodities in the medium term, with emphasis of achieving diversification" (TD/B/CN.1/24). The report briefly examines the market trends for commodities and the evolution of export diversification in developing countries. It then analyses the relationship between various national policies and competitiveness and opportunities for diversification, as well as international support policies affecting market opportunities for commodities. The report includes some suggestions for consideration by the Committee for actions to assist, in particular, developing countries that remain highly dependent on a limited number of commodities for their export earnings.

Item 4: Identification of means by which the competitiveness of natural products with environmental advantages could be improved

With a view to assisting the Standing Committee in examining this item, the secretariat has prepared a study entitled "Identification of means by which the

competitiveness of natural products with environmental advantages could be improved: reducing the environmental stress of consumption without affecting consumer satisfaction" (TD/B/CN.1/25). The study aims to provide initial information on natural products with claims to environmental advantages and to establish a basis for action to increase their competitiveness. It focuses on products with supply potential from developing countries.

Item 5: Reports of the subsidiary organs of the Standing Committee

Under this item the Standing Committee will have before it the reports of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Tungsten on its second session, held from 8 to 10 November 1993 (TD/B/CN.1/18 - TD/B/CN.1/TUNGSTEN/8) and the report of the Third Ad Hoc Review Meeting on Bauxite, held from 2 to 3 May 1994 (TD/B/CN.1/20 - TD/B/CN.1/RM/BAUXITE/9).

Item 6: Provisional agenda for the fourth session of the Standing Committee

It is recalled that the first session of the Standing Committee on Commodities (see TD/B/39(2)/4 - TD/B/CN.1/6, paras. 80 and 81) decided that "the work programme agreed at its first session should provide the content for its agendas". It further agreed that "the choice of the specific agenda topics within the main headings of the work programme would be determined in the informal consultative mechanism established in accordance with paragraph 83 of the Cartagena Commitment, taking into account the evolution of the world commodity situation and progress in the work of the secretariat". The Standing Committee may wish to consider this issue in the light of the experience of the third session, and bearing in mind resolution 352(XXXIV) of the Trade and Development Board."

Item 7: Other business

Under this item the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Risk Management in Commodity Trade will report to the Standing Committee on the proceedings of the Ad Hoc Group for information and possible action.

Item 8: Adoption of the report of the Standing Committee to the Trade and Development Board

The report of the Standing Committee will be considered by the Trade and Development Board at the pre-sessional executive session to the second part of the forty-first session, scheduled to be held from 27 March to 7 April 1995.

" By its resolution 352(XXXIV), of 20 November 1987, the Board endorsed the report of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Working Group on the In-Depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields (TD/B/1154). The report specified, *inter alia*, that only one document of 24 pages should be prepared by the secretariat for each substantive agenda item, and that background documentation should be made available if requested and agreed to by member States.